

HONDA: RISING POWER IN SOLAR RACING

Already a world champion in two-wheel and four-wheel motor sports, Honda switches to a three-wheel layout (two front, one rear) for its newest racing effort. A team from Honda R&D Co., Ltd., is taking up November's 1990 World Solar Challenge from Darwin to Adelaide, Australia, with a car similar in shape to the General Motors Sunracer, though somewhat leaner. GM will not contest this event itself, instead it is sponsoring the top three finishers of last July's Sunracer USA ["Sun Racers," Aug.].

The Honda entry is nearly a foot shorter and 90 pounds lighter than the GM solar car that won the first trans-Australia race. The Honda's solar array utilizes single-crystal silicon cells with a total output of 1.4 kilowatts; power is stored in silver-

zinc batteries. The DC motor peaks at 4.5 kilowatts of power delivery, good for a top speed of 75 mph. In contrast, the GM Sunracer carried gallium arsenide solar cells, had a 7.5-kilowatt motor, and a top speed of 82 mph.

With 40 entries expected (10 from the United States) and three years of development time since the last Solar Challenge, the Australian race promises to be the world's premier event for sun-powered cars.—Norman S. Mayersohn

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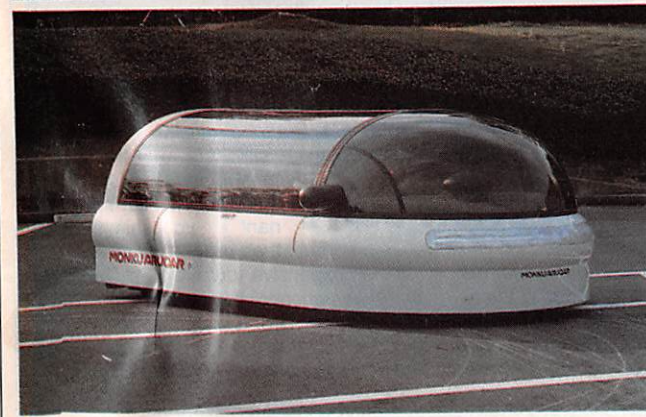


SUN POWER

Toyota's experimental RaKa II is the first solar-powered car in Japan to get a license plate—authorizing its operation on the nation's roadways. The single-seat open vehicle has a top speed of 27.5 mph and weighs 463 pounds. A battery makes operation possible in any weather.

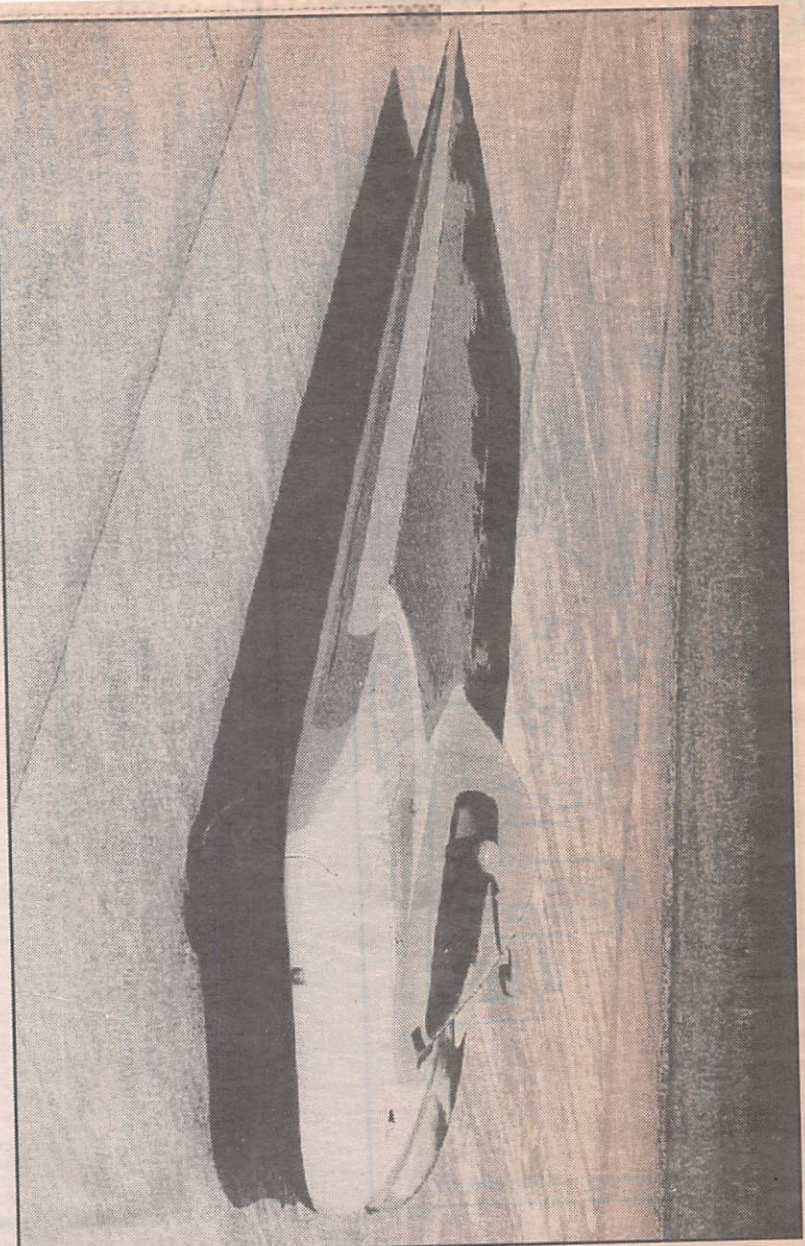


Automotive Newsfront



The New City Vehicle (above, left) raises and lowers its body on four hubless wheels to allow changes in ground clearance. Swimming motions propel the Swimming Machine (above, right). The Town House Car (left) turns into an entrance for homes with no parking space.

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REUTERS

Solar-powered racing car

Japanese carmaker Toyota introduces the RaFa 10, a high-performance, solar-powered racing car. The single-seat car has a maximum speed of 74 mph and is in-

tended for use in rallies, to promote environmental awareness and to obtain technical data. The car was unveiled in Tokyo this week. *8-7-92*

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